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NEW ORLEANS FIRE DEPARTMENT WINTER WEATHER FIRE SAFETY TIPS

With this current stint of cold weather, the New Orleans Fire Department would like to take this time to remind citizens not to compromise their safety in an effort to keep warm. Below is a list of Winter Fire Safety Tips to keep in mind:

ALTERNATIVE HEATERS

- Use heaters only in well ventilated rooms.
- Place heaters where they will not be knocked over easily.
- Do not use heaters to dry clothing or other items.
- Keep heaters at a safe distance from curtains, furniture and all combustibles.
- Don't leave children alone with space heaters on. An adult should always be present when a space heater is in use.

HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH UNVENTED HEATERS

- Depletion of oxygen from the room resulting in death.
- Clothing or close combustibles catching on fire when close to flames.
- Air pollution such as carbon monoxide whenever fuel is incompletely burned.

ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS

- Plug heaters directly into the wall socket, and not into extension cords.
- Check the cords on electric heaters before using. If the cord is frayed or splitting, have the cord replaced by an appliance repair person.
- Keep anything that may burn at least 3 feet away from the heater.
- Never allow children to play with, or around, the heater.
- Never place anything inside the grill on the front of the heater.
- Unplug heater when they're not being used.

HEATING SOURCES

- Floor furnaces should be cleaned and vacuumed prior to usage and should be checked for proper ventilation.
- Make sure floor furnaces are clear of all coverings.
- All gas heating sources should put out a clear blue flame, if you see a primarily orange or yellowish flame; have it checked by a professional.
- All gas heating sources must also be properly ventilated. Keeping a window slightly opened can circulate fresh air and reduce carbon monoxide buildups in tightly sealed houses.

- Never! Use a stove or oven to heat the home. This causes a buildup of deadly carbon monoxide gas in the home.

CANDLES

- Before you light candles put them in a non-tip candle holder.
- Never burn candles near a Christmas tree or combustible decorations or displays.
- Keep candles well away from curtains and other combustibles, and never put candles in windows or near exits.
- Don't leave candles burning unattended or within the reach of small children.
- Extinguish candles before you leave a room, go to bed, or leave home.

SAFE COOKING PRACTICES

- Don't leave food unattended on the stove.
- Pot handles are to be turned in while cooking on the stove.
- Keep dangling clothing away from burners.
- Keep appliances clean and free of grease and crumbs.
- Keep curtains and other combustibles away from the stove.
- Make sure the stove is off and small appliances are unplugged before going to bed.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy, especially in the kitchen.

SAFE SMOKING HABITS

- Never smoke in bed.
- Keep ashtrays away from upholstered furniture and curtains.
- Always extinguish cigars, cigarettes and tobacco completely.
- Check wastebaskets and furniture for smoldering cigarettes.

WOODSTOVES AND FIREPLACES

- Uses only seasoned wood, **never** use green wood, plastic artificial logs, paper or trash.
- Make sure the chimney flue is open before the fireplace is used.
- Always use a protective screen.
- Clean interiors, hearths and chimneys yearly.
- Have your chimney inspected by a professional at least once a year and have it cleaned if necessary.
- Remove ashes in a metal container.
- Because they may rekindle, never store ashes in your home.

SMOKE DETECTORS

- Install smoke detectors near bedrooms and on every floor.
- DO NOT install smoke detectors in the kitchen or bathroom.
- Test the batteries monthly.
- Keep smoke detectors away from air vents.
- Place smoke detectors at least 4 to 6 inches away from walls and corners.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

- Install carbon monoxide (CO) detectors near bedroom areas and family rooms, for extra protection; place one about fifteen feet away from your home's heat source.
- DO NOT install them near air vents or fans.
- Test your CO Detector each week by pressing the test/silence button to make sure that the alarm sounds.
- Keep your CO detectors dust free by vacuuming air vents regularly.